

May 13, 2021 Budget Work Session

A special meeting of the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia, was held on May 13, 2021, in Council Chambers, Municipal Building, at 6:00PM, to conduct a budget work session with Mayor Kathy Lawson presiding. Council Members present included Mayor Lawson, Vice Mayor Jennifer Bowles, Council Member Chad Martin, Council Member Tammy Pearson and Council Member Danny Turner. Staff present included City Manager Leon Towarnicki, City Attorney Eric Monday, Assistant Finance Director Mandy McGhee, Finance Director Linda Conover, Major Laura Hopkins and Sheriff Steve Draper

Mayor Lawson opened the Council meeting.

School Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley and Executive Director of Administrative Services Travis Clemons summarized the School budget. Every school is required to take SOLs so the schools can be graded on improvement. The schools are planning on a 5% cost of living raise and plan to pick up the rate increase on insurance for the staff. They plan to add two counselors to assist the students who have been out of the structured school setting this past year. The school is asking for additional funds to purchase school buses. School enrollment has increased by 30 students. The schools expect to receive additional CARES funding. Details on how those funds can be used has not been released yet.

Finance Director Linda Conover directed Council to page 34 of the budget book to begin the Sheriff's Department budget review. City Manager Towarnicki explained there were not many changes to the Sheriff's Department budget other than personnel changes. Sheriff Steve Draper and Major Laura Hopkins were in attendance to answer questions. COVID vaccinations, incarceration and overcrowding at the jail were discussed. Sanitation and cleaning supplies have increased in cost because of COVID.

City Manager Towarnicki said there could be some changes before the next Council Meeting or first June meeting if they can get additional information on the American Recovery Plan funding. Council discussed levelizing the real estate tax revenue and the need for a public hearing. Vice Mayor Bowles made a motion to levelize the real estate tax revenue by adopting a reduced real estate tax rate of \$1.03975/\$100 and reduce the children services budget line item to reflect the decreased revenue; Council Member Pearson seconded the motion with all Council Members in favor.

There being no further questions or discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:20pm.

Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council

Kathy Lawson, Mayor